



Helping People Help Themselves

# SPARE

# CHANGE

July 16 - July 29, 2010

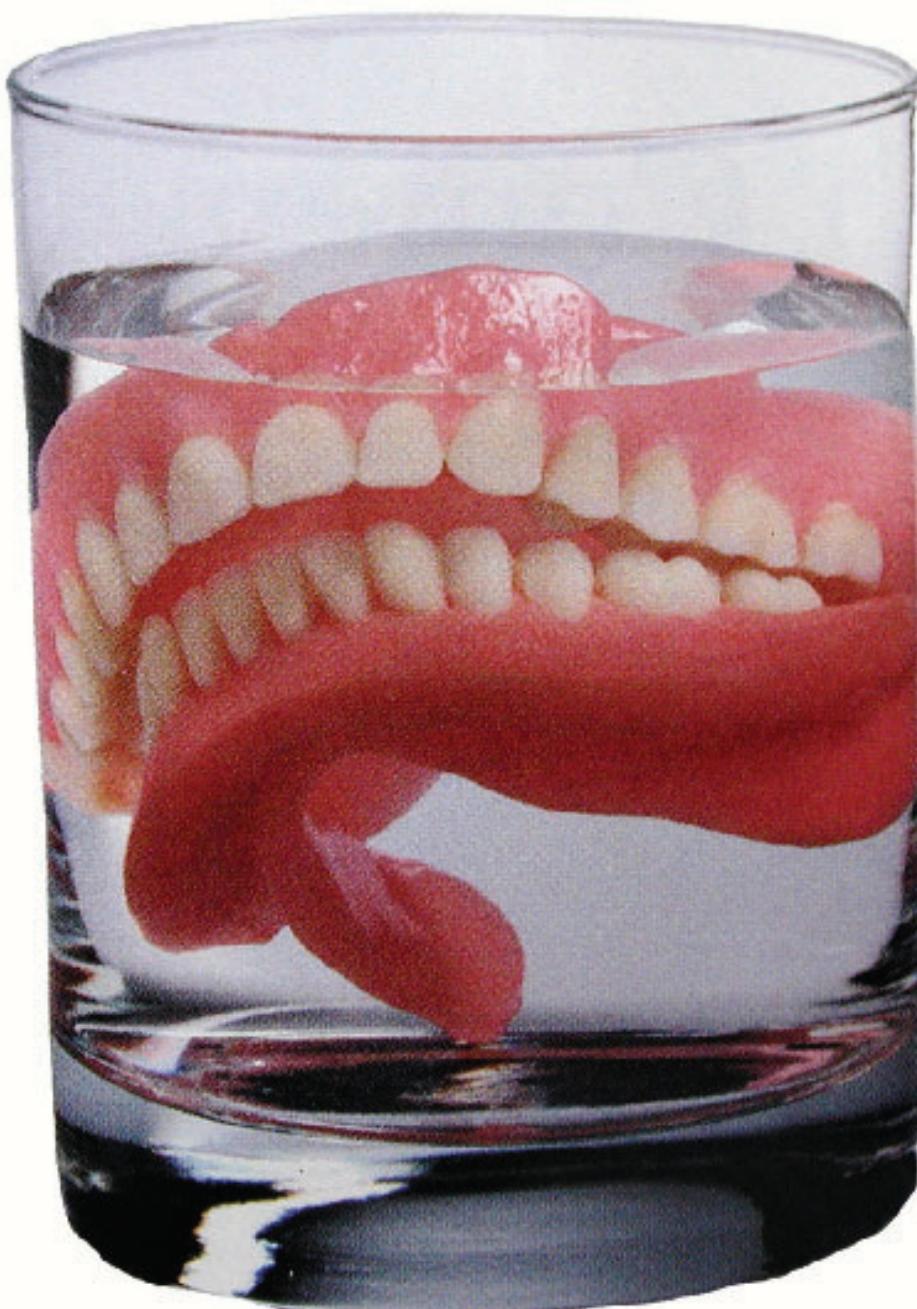
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## Spare Change News

is published by the HOMELESS EMPOWERMENT PROJECT (HEP)

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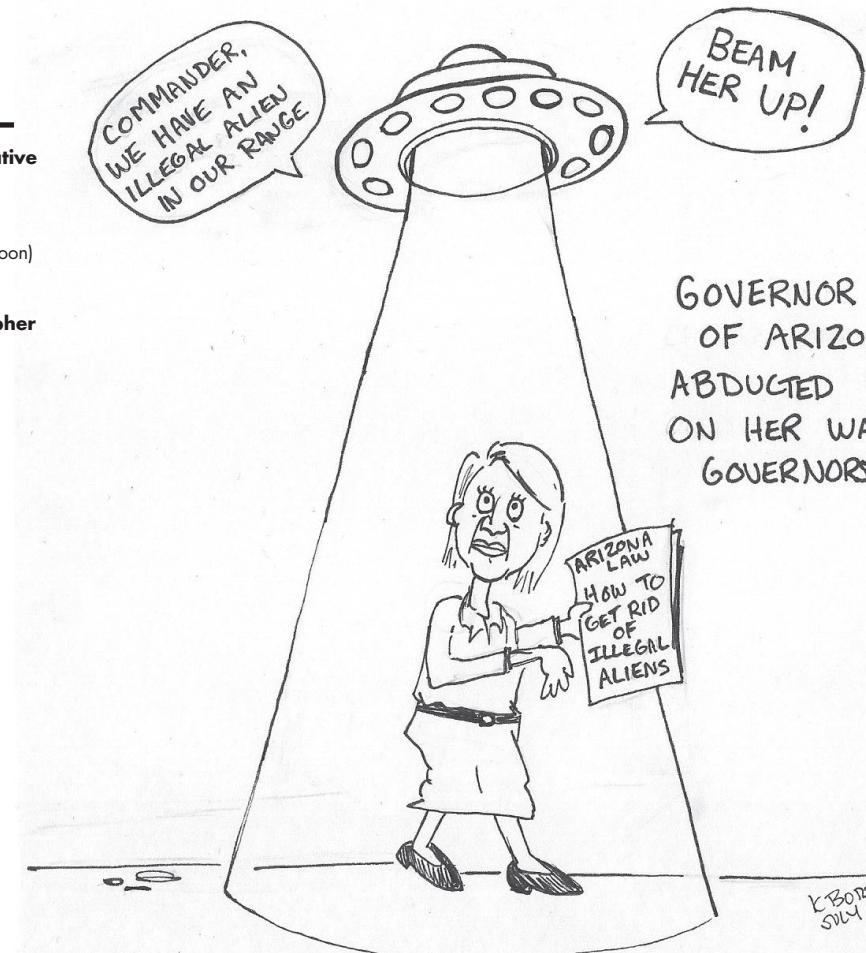
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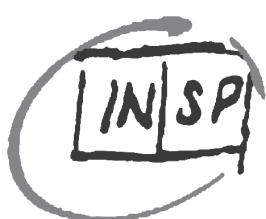
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## The Streets Are Watching



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### Vision & Mission

*Spare Change News* was founded in 1992 by a group of homeless people and a member of Boston Jobs with Peace. *Spare Change* is published by the nonprofit organization The Homeless Empowerment Project (HEP).

#### SPARE CHANGE'S GOAL:

"To present, by our own example, that homeless and economically disadvantaged people, with the proper resources, empowerment, opportunity, and encouragement are capable of creating change for ourselves in society."

#### HEP'S OBJECTIVES:

To empower the economically disadvantaged in Greater Boston through self-employment, skill development and self-expression. To create forums, including those of independent media in order to reshape public perception of poverty and homelessness.

As many of you read in last weeks issue, Spare Change News has recently undergone some significant changes. David Jefferson, who has done a tremendous job as Editor over the past year, has now assumed the role of Executive Director of the Homeless Empowerment Project, which publishes Spare Change. While it is sad to see David stepping away from the editorial role, this is a positive step for both him and Spare Change, as he can now focus on developing the organization as a whole.

As the new Editor of Spare Change I think it is important for me to introduce myself and share a little bit of my background. My name is Adam Sennott, I recently graduated from Bunker Hill Community College with a liberal arts degree under the communications concentration. During my time at Bunker Hill Community College, I was lucky enough to be able to participate in several internships with local newspapers such as the Watertown Tab and Press, the West Roxbury Transcript, the Allston-Brighton Tab, and the Needham Times. During these internships I wrote feature stories and learned how to shoot short video clips. After completing these internships I was later hired as a freelance writer. I also have experience writing stories for the Bunker Hill Community College Magazine and game wrap-ups for the Bay State Summer Games. Earlier this year I was accepted to Emerson College where I planned to major in print and multimedia journalism, however, for financial reasons I elected to defer my acceptance for a year.

While I have experience writing for other newspapers, some of you may already be familiar with my work, as I have been a regular contributor to Spare Change for a little over a year. I remember the first story I contributed to Spare Change. It was a bio on a former math teacher of mine who had overcome a serious health condition to work her way off the streets and into a class room. While her story is

remarkable, when I handed that story in I had no idea how many people I would meet who had similar stories of triumph. During the past year I had the opportunity to meet some remarkable people who have fought through unimaginable circumstances, continuing to feature success stories such as these is something I look forward to as editor. Along with bios, I also worked on pieces involving granting the homeless hate crime protections, legislation which would have made it illegal for high level sex offenders to list a shelter as a place of residence, and much, much more. Over the past year Spare Change has been dedicated to covering tough issues surrounding homeless and social justice, and continuing and even improving upon this high journalistic standard is something Spare Change is committed to moving forward.

While Spare Change is committed to maintaining a high journalistic standard, I would like to encourage you, our readers, to be involved. If you have a story idea or hear a tip you think could be useful, please share it. Although Spare Change has many dedicated writers and a passionate group of vendors who constantly have their eyes and ears on the streets, we do not have the resources many other local newspapers enjoy. The more tips and story suggestions we receive the better of the quality of the product we can deliver to you, our readers. However, my contact with you should not simply be limited to story ideas. Readers with comments or criticisms should not hesitate to send me an e-mail (Editor@sparechangenews.net). Your feedback is important to Spare Change, and helps ensure we deliver the most thorough and accurate paper possible.

My last year with Spare Change has been an incredible experience, and I look forward to continuing to work with our dedicated group of writers, vendors, and within the local community.

# Cuts Extract Mass Health Dental Benefits From Budget

Liam Cunningham  
Spare Change News

As part of Governor Deval Patrick's broad, expansive plan to cut more than \$800 million from next year's state budget, Mass Health dental benefits for adults are no longer being provided.

The cuts to the Mass Dental program will eliminate fillings, treatment for gum disease, and dentures. This last measure is particularly troublesome for low-income seniors who rely on dentures as an integral component of their daily nutrition. Fillings, one of the other primary aspects of the Mass Dental program being eliminated, are crucial in preventing the spread of dental decay and disease.

With these cuts taking effect, the only remaining coverage for members of the Mass Health adult dental program is for check-ups, cleanings, and extractions. Christine Keeves is director of the Massachusetts Oral Advocacy Taskforce, a branch of the organization, Health Care For All: Massachusetts. The Oral Advocacy Task Force led an effort to halt the budget cuts to the MassHealth Dental programs. In an article posted on the Health Care for All website on May 14th, 2010, Keeves asserts: "Of all MassHealth benefits, dental is the most universal—it provides vital health coverage to nearly 700,000 people in Massachusetts." In total, according to this same site, the cuts to Mass Dental will cut benefits for "around 700,000 people, including more than 120,000 seniors and more than 180,000 disabled individuals with HIV/AIDS."

Dentist Barry W. Aston of Hudson, Massachusetts has argued the Mass Dental program played a crucial role preventing costly trips to the hospital due to dental emergencies, and has even written articles about the issue in the Metrowest Daily News and other local publications.

"I will be losing around \$60,000 with the cuts to MassDental, so I have a personal interest vested in this," Aston said. "But that truly isn't my main beef. What I care most about are the thousands of special needs patients who are going to be losing

very important care as a result of these cuts. It's not fair."

However, dentists aren't the only ones speaking out against the Governor's proposed cuts. Several prominent Massachusetts legislators have lobbied against the cuts in the weeks leading up to their enactment. One of the first politicians to make a concentrated effort to prevent these cuts from being put in place was State Representative John Sciback, who filed an amendment in March to keep the current Mass Dental program in place.

"The bottom line is if people don't get consistent dental services, the state loses more money," said Sciback, emphasizing that these cuts will not only negatively impact all those treated under Mass Health, but also the State itself.

Research and statistics done by the Oral Health Advocacy Task Force Of Massachusetts support Sciback's assertion that these cuts are in fact retroactive in doing what they are designed to do: save money. According to a recent press release from the Task Force, "the long term cost of eliminating adult dental care is 2.5 times more expensive than the cost of providing care."

Around 700,000 Massachusetts citizens will be impacted by these cuts to Mass Dental. According to Representative Sciback, within this large group, there are demographics and groupings of people for whom the cuts will be particularly problematic.

"These cuts will affect everybody on Mass Health. But within this there are going to be groups disproportionately affected; such as people with disabilities and low-income citizens," said Sciback.

Like Sciback, State Senator Harriette Chandler recently filed an amendment seeking to preserve and protect the program as it is. The amendment gained significant support amongst various legislators and figures within Boston's political and social communities.

Deborah Banda, Director of the

Massachusetts branch of the AARP, is among those who have voiced their support for this amendment. According to a statement released on May 26th, 2010 by the Massachusetts branch of the AARP Banda stated that she felt this amendment was the only chance to prevent the cuts from being enacted at the beginning of July.

thousands of Massachusetts's citizens, the amendment was unable to garner enough support within the Senate and was eliminated.

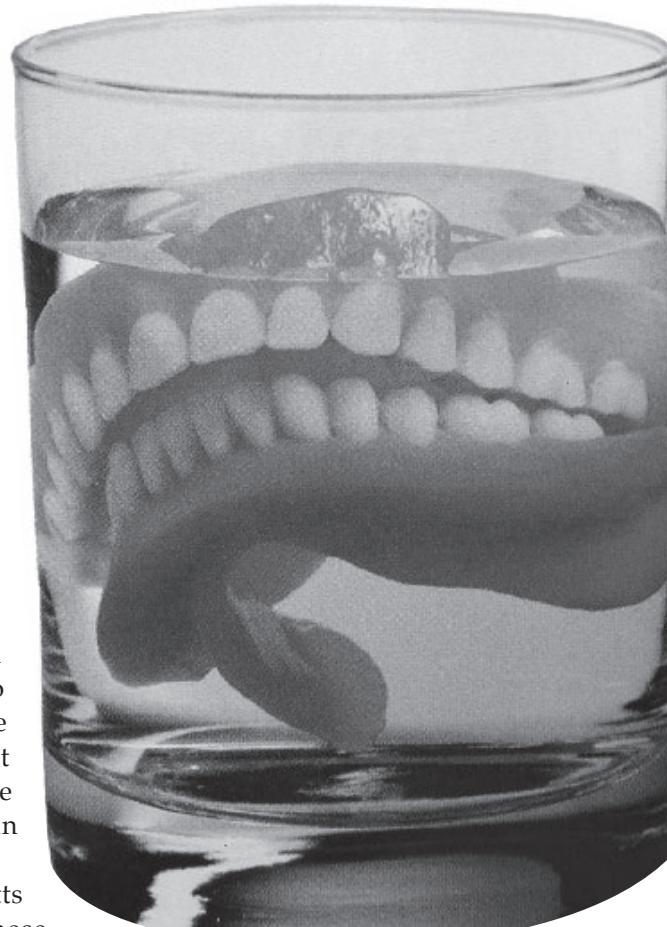
While low-income seniors will be the group most significantly impacted by these cuts; they will also have a profound impact upon the thousands of homeless in the state, many of which benefited greatly from the

MassHealth dental program that is being eliminated. As mentioned earlier, the program will no longer cover fillings and procedures such as root canals and bridges. However the program will still cover extractions. For the homeless, this means a return to the old adage: "If it hurts, pull it." Now teeth that could be saved through root canals or other procedures will simply be yanked.

Furthermore, without fillings, low-income citizens and the homeless will be at a drastically heightened risk of dental decay and further disease, as fillings are the main technique for stopping and preventing the spread of decay and disease. These cuts to the Mass dental cut will exacerbate the health problems the homeless face within their day-to-day lives.

Representative Sciback discussed how these cuts represent yet another obstacle standing in the way of homeless citizen's ascensions from poverty.

"It is definitely going to affect the problem [homelessness]. It's going to make it much more difficult for the homeless to escape the cycle they are caught in. If they are trying to find work, or trying to find job training, it's going to be much more difficult if the mouth looks awful," said Sciback. "The homeless are really caught between a rock and a hard place with this. Life for them was difficult before these cuts. Losing these services is devastating."



"Let me be frank: Proper dental care, including dentures, is not a luxury, for older persons, in particular, they are key to getting proper nutrition and staying healthy," Banda said in the statement released by the Massachusetts branch of the AARP. "If the Chandler amendment does not pass, more than 700,000 adults, including 130,000 seniors in Massachusetts will lose access to regular dental services."

Before the cuts to the Mass Dental program took effect the Massachusetts Senate debated on a wide range of issues, including Senator Chandler's amendment to preserve the MassHealth adult dental program as it is. Unfortunately for hundreds of

# Lillian MacDonald: A Success Story

Alexandra Cheng  
Spare Change News

From her second floor studio apartment, Lillian MacDonald looks listlessly out the window. "This is my home," she says of her humble abode, decorated from wall to wall with pictures, the smell of cinnamon and sweet scents from candles permeating the air. Most of the pictures are black and whites of family members and saints. There are three vials of holy water by the door and small wooden crucifix above her beautifully appointed burgundy bed.

At 50, Lillian MacDonald has experienced more life than most. She was homeless for four years, following some hard times and a short stint in jail. However, with much determination, a great deal of goodwill, hard work, and a little luck, she has now been housed for three years.

Though she goes by Lillian, there are many other names and phrases to describe her and paint a picture of her journey. So too, does the small apartment she calls home reflect her story.

Lillian MacDonald was born in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, the fifth of six children. Her father was a coal miner and her mother was a nurse. After the mines closed when MacDonald was three years old, the family of eight moved to Hanson, Massachusetts, where her father worked in the cranberry bogs at Ocean Spray.

MacDonald's family was extremely Catholic and her mother named her Lillian in honor of St. Ninian. A picture of her patron saint hangs by the window as a comforting presence in her home, a small reminder of her childhood and her innate spirituality.

"Lily the Lister." After high school, MacDonald dabbled in numerous jobs and academic pursuits. When her childhood desire to become a nun seemed far from reach, MacDonald enrolled in secretariat and modeling school.

She proudly handled worn photographs of her mother's that showed a younger version of herself from that period, her long hair blowing in a mild breeze and freckles dotting her face. Her hair is pulled back in a tight bun now, showcasing her pixie ears and tired eyes.

MacDonald later obtained a real estate license and worked for Coldwell Banker and Conway, where she earned the nickname "Lilly the Lister." She was also a reggae concert promoter in Boston for a short while. "I always had two to three jobs going on at the same time," she said.

MacDonald later enrolled at the University of Massachusetts Boston,

majoring in sociology and substance abuse studies. She also took classes in nursing.

Dreamer. A small dream catcher hangs above her desk, a representation of her wishful attitude. MacDonald has ADD, which has contributed to her free spirited nature. "I'm a bit of a dreamer," she said. However, she has also struggled with depression since her youth, creating a paradox in her disposition.

Additionally, MacDonald has been afflicted with numerous health problems, a situation that quickly became perilous. She almost lost her leg to complications stemming from Hepatitis C, enduring many transfusions and surgeries on her ankle. She only learned to walk again this winter. Her reliance on pain medications for her various ailments throughout her

leave the state, preventing her from moving in with a sister in New Hampshire, and leaving her with no place to go.

Not only had she lost her home, but her personal relationships were strained as well. "No one wanted anything to do with me," said MacDonald. "Your whole family treats you like you're a criminal, like you're a disease." Admittedly, she had burned some bridges and "hurt people you didn't mean to hurt" during her tough times leading up to her arrest, but MacDonald had never thought she could lose control of her entire life, livelihood, home, and support system.

MacDonald then began what she called the "shelter shuffle" for the next three years. "You feel like you have no self-worth," she said of her time on streets. Her family quickly disposed of her belongings, leaving her with nothing but what she could carry on her back.

"You're constantly losing your stuff," said MacDonald. "All your worldly possessions end up being gone...every picture, every childhood memory...gone."

She remembered an afternoon in the Public Gardens during a heat wave, when she had felt sick and fell asleep under a tree. She awoke to police rushing at her to move her along because her presence was unnerving others in the park.

"People look at you like you're garbage," she said of her experience being homeless. "There's no rest and your feet are killing you, but there's nowhere to go."

Though MacDonald never actually slept a night out on the street, her cycle from shelter to shelter was wearing, complicated, and terrifying.

Of her "traumatic experience," she said, "you just deal with it. You have to be really resilient, be a survivor."

"I'm a go-getter." After three years rotating in and out of different shelters, Lillian landed on the steps of the Sancta Maria House. She recalled walking through the unassuming door of the shelter and seeing a small statue of the Virgin Mary atop the staircase. "It's like I died and went to heaven," she said, instantly feeling that this place was different. She found a temporary home at Sancta Maria House and solace in its volunteers.

With semblances of regularity and a glimmer of hope, MacDonald, a self-starter, put her efforts into amending her situation.

Working with laws that require three years of continuously being homeless to

qualify for housing aid, the process of getting oneself off the street proved extremely difficult. Stay limits at shelters, including Sancta Maria House, made it nearly impossible to correspond with different agencies and hold onto required paperwork.

For those who lack a permanent address, it is a vicious cycle, taken off lists for being unreachable. "You get so far, and then boom...you have to start all over again," said MacDonald. "It's so discouraging."

By this time, MacDonald was sober and clean. She had graduated from Victory Programs, a rehabilitation facility and used every resource she could think of to achieve a better lifestyle. She received help from numerous advocates but noted that they can only do so much. "You have to help yourself," she said.

MacDonald said her epiphany came when she stopped pointing fingers and blaming others for her woes and took responsibility for herself.

Though she was number 800 on a housing waitlist, she was placed in a space of her own in less than a year. "I got it because most people wouldn't do what they needed to do," referencing those higher on the list but who couldn't remain "straight." "I lost everything else but I had my papers!"

MacDonald has been in her apartment for three years. The only signs of her health problems are the medications she packs in an overnight case and scars on her legs from the surgeries to treat her Hepatitis C, which is now non-detectable. MacDonald also finished her college degree in sociology. She hopes to move into a one-bedroom apartment soon and is applying for jobs at organizations that aid the homeless.

"I remember the first night - no bed, no lights in the sleeping area, had a bed at Sancta Maria, but slept in my new home and cried with thanks and praises for the passionate people who helped me and the glory of our lord mother Mary to whom I have prayed after being at Sancta Maria."

"White Santa." While in college, MacDonald and a friend traveled to Jamaica looking for jobs on a whim. Seeing children at a hospital on Treasure Beach in St. Elizabeth, MacDonald felt a kinship with the tropical locale.

She goes back every winter and works with sick children at an orphanage, donating time and supplies. With each trip abroad over the holidays, she brings large bags of donated or cheaply-acquired

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life led to a drug addiction, augmented by experimental use as a teenager. "I've always struggled to clean up," said MacDonald.

Alcohol abuse after reaching menopause led to two D.U.I.s, which in turn landed MacDonald in jail, a stint that would lead to her homelessness.

Survivor. Seven years ago, MacDonald spent six months in the Massachusetts Correctional Institution for women in Framingham. "It was scary and very painful" she said. Because she could no longer attend school, MacDonald failed out of UMass.

Constantly proactive, MacDonald tried to keep busy during her six months in prison, joining the choir and taking college classes in an attempt to get back on track.

She was "released to the streets" with 75 dollars to her name and uniform blue shoes called "bobos," a marker of the recently incarcerated. However, the conditions of her parole did not allow her to

# Local Housing Programs:

## History of the Cambridge Housing Assistance Fund Violence is epidemic, and some don't even want to count

**Robert Sondak**

Spare Change News

In 1999 after rent control was changed to reflect the need of low to moderate income people; a group of Cambridge business leaders created a program to provide subsidies and affordable rental housing within the city of 100,000 people. The Cambridge Community of Realtors, Cambridge Trust Company, East Cambridge Savings Bank, and Cambridge Savings Bank worked in conjunction with the mayor and city council to form the Cambridge Housing Assistance Fund (CHAF). Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology also joined in to support the combined efforts of these local banks, the mayor and city council.

Since it was founded in 1999, CHAF has raised 1.5 million dollars. This rental subsidy program has helped 1,400 families transition into affordable housing. The total client population served by CHAF represents approximately 5,000 people or 20 percent of the city's residents.

Currently, CHAF works with two agency partners, the Cambridge Office of Homestart and the Central Square-based Cambridge Multi Service Center (CMSC). Homestart provides housing searches for homeless couples and families, and makes client referrals to matching people with housing subsidies. They also assist clients in locating housing in the open commercial market. CMSC also provides housing searches and support services to the homeless and near homeless single people, including retirees, widowers and working people. CMSC ser-

vices include information and referrals to housing programs, access to telephone and voice mail, transportation referrals and assisting in landlord negotiations.

The application process for individuals, couples, and families begins with people registering. People need to register at the appropriate agency based on household status. People come in, fill out all the paperwork, and then meet with agency staff. Agency staff guides all clients, based on family size and income level, to the appropriate housing programs.

Clients qualify for the CHAF program based on three criteria. The first criteria requires that all interested people must register and get their paperwork approved. Secondly, all clients must be Cambridge residents. The third criteria stipulates that all people have to be or near homeless, meaning that they cannot afford the startup costs such as a security deposit and first month's rent.

David Pap of chair of the CHAF planning committee stated that they do not do any grant funding at all. Pap pointed out that organization sponsors a fundraiser in the fall that raises the funds to pay for the rental subsidiary program for the whole year. He elaborated that they have a major group of contributors in Cambridge and Boston that make a yearly donation. He said that the 2010 fundraiser is scheduled at the Hyatt Regency in Cambridge on October 16, 2010.

I recently spoke David Pap, chairman of the planning committee and a founding member about the program, about how

the program started and its history, who the agency partners are, how the fundraiser works and how the money is spent.

### RS: How did CHAF start?

**DP:** "In the late 1990's the Cambridge Community of Realtors went to the city administration with a proposal to create a down-payment affordable housing program. The city responded that they have a program that helps first time low to moderate income families to get a subsidized second mortgage, which reduces the total housing costs called the Second Soft loan program. The realtors group countered with a subsidized program that guarantees the start up cost for affordable rental housing for homeless or near homeless people."

### RS: Why does CHAF work with Homestart and the CMSC?

**DP:** "Originally CHAF worked with three agency partners. The three initial partners included the Cambridge Housing Authority, CASCAP, and CMSC. This agency collaboration changed in 2001 when the contracts expired. After 2001 Homestart joined CMSC as the two current agency partners."

### RS: How does the fundraiser work?

**DP:** "We sponsor a yearly fundraiser. The 2010 fundraiser this year occurs in October. All of business contributors make a donation ranging from \$750 to \$15,000. Our donors include a leadership circle consisting of the Cambridge Trust Company, the Cambridge Saving

Bank and Caldwell Banker Residential Brokerage Cares. We also have a series of business organizations that are classified as benefactors, patrons, donors and friends of the organization. These businesses support CHAF by making a fundraising donation. This year's event consists of a three part evening social event. Part one is a desert sampling create by local chefs, catering companies and retail food companies. Part two is a port wine test. Part three is a night of ballroom dancing."

### RS: Who can come to the CHAF fundraiser?

**DP:** "Our corporate partners send their representatives to the Cambridge fundraiser. The general public can purchase tickets at our web site and can come and also support our work."

### RS: How does the fund work?

**DP:** An approval committee is organized consisting of agency staff from both Homestart and the CMSC. This joint committee dispenses grants based on client and expected housing retention. This program committee approves money to be allocated based on the three criteria agreed by the Cambridge Community of Realtors that have been implemented by the two agencies partners.

*Robert Sondak is a Spare Change vendor and writer. Robert has a Bachelor degree from the University of Massachusetts Boston, College of Public and Community Service (CPCS). Robert also minored in planning and advocacy.*

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stuffed animals to brighten the children's spirits. Medical supplies and equipment, computers, and basic living items also make the trip with the "white Santa," as the children she interacts with call her.

Giving back the community to which she once belonged is important for MacDonald. She volunteers at Sancta Maria House regularly, staying overnight to help guests and contributing to the shelter's maintenance, working on an outdoor garden and organizing a closet

full of donations.

"Now I try to pay it back," she said, offering advice and guidance to women that find themselves homeless as she once was. "I really love the contact with the women," said MacDonald.

A well-spring of donations, MacDonald's creativity spills over into her acts of goodwill, her constant scavenging yielding found objects that could be of use to a disadvantaged someone, somewhere. "You shouldn't throw anything out that's useable," she said. "Send it off elsewhere, someone could benefit

from it."

MacDonald hopes to someday author a book filled with photographs the faces and stories of the homeless. "People really don't understand who they are," she said, "that people from all walks of life end up here."

An easel by the window supports an acrylic painting of a Martha's Vineyard seascape. The brilliant blues of the water, the deep purple of a blooming bush that bursts off the canvas, and spatters of white clouds act as a backdrop to two white lawn chairs framing a champagne

bottle.

"Dom Perignon," says MacDonald, an inside joke for a friend in the hospital. The scene, which looks like the front of a postcard, clearly represents better days, optimism, and hope, all of which have brought Lillian MacDonald to where she is today.

"I really thought I wasn't going to make it," she said, but, "there is housing at the end of the tunnel."

"Through the grace of God, I'm alive, and all you can do is change for the future."

# TRAINED AND READY:

## Pine Street Inn Celebrates Job Training Graduation

**Adam Sennott**  
Spare Change News

They signed up with the goal of becoming self sufficient, and graduate with the skills necessary to find a job and get back on their feet.

The Pine Street Inn celebrated its annual job training graduation ceremony on June 24th, granting certificates in honor of students who completed either the food services or building maintenance job training programs.

The Pine Street Inn's job training programs consists of students who are looking to learn skills which will enable them to earn a job and become self sufficient. Currently the Pine Street Inn offers job training programs in two areas.

"There are two different programs, one is in food services training in various aspects of food preparation and cafeteria operation," said Barbara Trevisan, Spokeswoman for the Pine Street Inn. "The other is in Building Maintenance, so various forms of building skills like plumbing, electrical, painting, yard work."

Each program varies between 12-14 weeks and includes students who were referred by case managers and from other programs. Each year these programs combine for more than 100 graduates.

"They [students] can be referred by case managers; we also do have other people that are referred in from other programs, so it's not exclusively Pine Street," said Trevisan. "We have about 125 or so students complete the program each year."

While both programs are run through the Pine Street Inn and celebrate their graduations on the same day, they are separate programs and are even held in separate facilities.

"The building maintenance training program is actually held out at Anchor Inn in Long Island," said Nick Pieri, Manager of the building maintenance program.

Although students are often referred to the job training program, they are still required to apply and interview for a spot in the program. During the application process to the building maintenance program, Pine Street Inn looks for students who are motivated and have passed experience in the area they're being trained. However, past experience is not required.

"Some prior experience doing something, showing that they like to work with their hands is good," said Pieri. "Although we have accepted people who don't have any formal job experience if their level of motivation is high and they really want to learn a trade and get back into the work world or get into the work force for the first time, that's really the biggest thing."

Once accepted into one of the Pine Street Inn's two job training programs, students get hands on experience in their trade. In the building maintenance program, students learn how to safely



handle tools as well as basic knowledge in carpentry and some electrical and plumbing.

"It's a 10 week chapter eight program and focuses on skill in safety tool usage, safe and effective use of tools, hand and power tools, basic carpentry,



basic repair, that's most of it" said Pieri. "We also do a little bit of electrical and plumbing repair."

Along with receiving basic levels of job training, students in the building maintenance training program are also eligible to work as an intern for various local organizations, or even use their new found skills to give back to the social enterprise.

"The complete the program and then they have the opportunity to work either an internship with a local organization and there maintenance program, or they can work for the social enterprise afterwards for three months," said Pieri.

Along with the opportunity to work an internship and gain first hand experience at their new trade, many graduates have gone on to earn jobs at places within the community.

"They [graduates] have worked for The Greater Boston YMCA, several dif-

ferent branches, the Franklin Park Zoo, The Boston Center for the Arts," said Pieri. "It's going well, and over the last year we have been developing Boston Handy Works."

Boston Handy Works is a social enterprise created through the building

maintenance program to help fund the training program.

"Boston Handy Works is a social enterprise which we have created to help to fund the training program, because as budgets get tighter and tighter and public money isn't paying for training programs very much, so it's like a business that we run in the community," said Pieri.

Pieri continued, "So we do jobs for higher with the training program graduates. So that's what we've been working on over the past year. So we're just getting out there and doing a lot more jobs in different places."

Along with the recent formation on Boston Handy Works, the building maintenance program also recently added horticultural landscaping as part of their program.

"There was an additional component over these last three months. We worked with an organization called Cog Design, and had a horticultural training program, we just completed that as a pilot program," said Pieri. "That will be a piece of the building maintenance curriculum, so we will have another one of those starting in September."

This years graduation ceremony was held on June 24th. During the ceremony 27 students from the building maintenance program received certificates along with students from the food services program and residents former residents of Pine Street Inn who had recently moved into permanent housing.

# The Purloined Heart Part II



Jacques Fleury  
Spare Change News

## Gulp Fiction

The late afternoon sun hung like an orange on the far east side of the sky as they play basketball together. There was no one else on the court and there was a quiet intensity in the air as if there was an impending thunder storm nearing. It became obvious to Clark Bent that Joey Defalco did not know how to play basketball. So Clark Bent got behind Joey Defalco and with his big muscular hands over Joey Defalco's and whispered "Relax...take a deep breath and shoot." And Joey Defalco almost did just that, except it wasn't the basketball.

They continued to do things together over the next few months, and one day Clark Bent invited Joey Defalco over for dinner so that he could meet his wife. Something Joey Defalco wasn't particularly looking forward to, but he sucked it up and acted eager and grateful for the invite.

When Joey Defalco first layed eyes on Delfina Bigbresta Bent, he thought she looked like a porcelain statuette with long straight blond hair, high sleek cheekbones and blue eyes. She was an hourglass figure, and young, very, very young. She couldn't have been any older then 21. Joey Defalco thought, "How could I possibly compete with that?" But for Clark Bent's sake, he met her and made pleasantries all the while looking at his watch anticipating the end of the evening.

As time went by, Joey Defalco and Clark Bent developed a routine of hanging out together every Friday night at the local bar to drink and play pool together. And each time, they grew closer and closer. Clark Bent started to confide in Joey Defalco about his relationship with his wife. He told him that all was not as perfect as it seemed and that he has certain "feelings" that he couldn't talk to Delfina about. Clark Bent explained how they had stopped communicating and being each other's best friends and confidants ever since they had their son, Clark Bent Jr. Clark Bent did not anticipate them growing apart so swiftly. Joey Defalco tried desperately to appear empathetic. He tried desperately to hide his joy over Clark Bent's discontentment with his home life because that clearly left the door wide open for him to infiltrate himself into their lives and push their already troubled relationship over the edge. Home wrecker! I am nothing but a little home wrecker! Joey Defalco

thought to himself. Joey Defalco was more than elated to allow Clark Bent to share his problems with Delfina. It didn't take long for them spend even more time together when all of a sudden, Joey Defalco suggested that they go away to Cape Cod for an entire weekend.

This was to be his moment of truth: the seduction of Clark Bent. Clark Bent told Delfina that he and Joey Defalco were going "fishing" together on the cape, since that's what Joey Defalco told him. Little did he know that Joey Defalco had reserved a hotel room with just one Queen sized bed.

He was in for a surprise once he got there. By this point, Clark Bent had grown so much closer to Joey Defalco emotionally that he didn't feel uncomfortable in his presence. While he was aware of Joey Defalco's sexual attraction to him, it was something he chose to ignore since it did not pose any immediate threat to his own sexuality. As a matter of fact, the whole scenario was a welcomed distraction from his unsatisfactory home life. Their life had become a dreaded monotony of predictable routine, and Joey Defalco presented an opportunity for excitement, mystery and suspense. The stuff that great novels are made of, with Clark Bent as the handsome protagonist with the potential to be a heartbreaker.

When they got to the Heritage House Hotel in Hyannis, they checked in and upon entering the room, Clark Bent noticed for the first time that there was only one bed. He looked coyly at Joey Defalco while shaking his head from side to side. Joey Defalco just smiled with a hint of sparkle in his eyes. That night, after spending time window shopping on Main Street and visiting the JFK museum, they stripped down to their bathing suits and went to the pool area which had a hot tub and sauna. Joey Defalco got to see Clark Bent in a tiny tightly stretched Speedo that left little to the imagination.

He began to think about their sleeping arrangement for later. What if Clark Bent slept with his back to him? That would be humiliating and he was not sure that he could handle that. But later, as the sun went down and the sky turned a reddish orange, they finally went to bed, and Clark Bent emerged from the bathroom completely naked and Joey Defalco breathed a sigh of relief and pulled back the covers and took Clark Bent into his arms, his heart grinning and blushing with pleasure and excitement. Outside, the moon hovered by their window creating a luminescent glow highlighting their unspoken feelings for one another and Joey Defalco wished he could freeze time, so that they could stay like

this forever. All they did during the nights was hold each other. It was the purest kind of love, akin to the slow burning love between virginal teenagers; as innocent as fresh running water in a remote mountain stream, unsoiled by human presence. But soon, he knew that Clark Bent would have to go back to his beautiful wife in his beautiful home in Cambridge. Something must be done about the wife, he thought.

He was never one to believe in Voodoo, but this was an extreme case, he could not go on living if he could not be with Clark Bent. So he decided to consult with his Father, who when he was in Haiti, was a Houngan which means a Voodoo priest with magical powers. He told his father about his relationship with Clark Bent. His father was not completely thrilled about his son being gay, but he loved his son nevertheless and he wanted to do whatever he could to help him. He told his dad that he wanted Clark Bent to fall out of love with Delfina and completely in love with him. He wanted Clark Bent's love to be so fixated on himself that his heart would love no one else except him and him only until the day he dies. His father warned him that there might be some danger in someone loving you to that kind of extreme, but Joey Defalco would hear none of it. He had never heard of someone dying from too much love and he begged his dad to prepare a spell so that he could cast it on Clark Bent. His father told him that he would have to steal a string of Clark Bent's hair and bring it back to him. With that, he would prepare the potion that would steal Clark Bent's love away from Delfina.

Joey Defalco went visiting Clark Bent one day, and much to his contentment, Delfina was not home. Clark Bent was fixing lunch and Joey Defalco excused himself to go to the lavatory. Looking over his shoulders to make sure it was safe; he gently pushed the bathroom door open, tip toed in and stole a string of Clark Bent's hair from his hairbrush, put it in piece of napkin and stuck it in his pocket before making his way back to the kitchen. Later that afternoon, he brought the Houngan the string of hair. His dad told him that he would have the potion ready by the upcoming weekend, when he knew he would be spending time with Clark Bent.

Jacques Fleury is a Poet, Author and Columnist; his book "Sparks in the Dark: A Lighter Shade of Blue, A Poetic Memoir" about life in Haiti & America was featured in the Boston Globe. Sample or buy the book at: [www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com). 20% of proceeds will go to Haiti charity Partners in Health. For personal appearances or comments, contact Jacques at: [haitianfirefly@gmail.com](mailto:haitianfirefly@gmail.com).

**While he was aware of Joey Defalco's sexual attraction to him, it was something he chose to ignore since it did not pose any immediate threat to his own sexuality.**



## Cemeteries

by Ed Galing

the rabbi had already finished the prayer of the dead, kaddish, the family and friends under the canopy on this grey day at the Montefiore cemetery, i remember, i remember, the birds flying overhead, the solemnity of the occasion, and the many gravestones surrounding us, i shed many tears as my two sons held me by my arms to keep me from falling, my two tall sons who would now be all i had, not counting the grandchildren and great grandchildren my wife had loved so much. when everyone left, i stood there, and just for a moment i thought i could hear my wife's voice, it began to rain and she was saying, stop crying, and go back to your car before you get soaked... her voice was so warm, loving, and wonderful, as i turned away.

## Plants From Hell

by Richard Croake

Working with my plants  
Not much that I can say  
  
The leaves are kind of wilted  
And the stems are sickly gray  
  
No matter what I do for them  
And I guess it's not a lot  
  
The buds keep falling off  
And the blossoms seem to rot  
  
Is there no one out there to help me  
Get these damn things well?  
  
They are the only plants I've ever had  
That will go to "Blooming Hell."

## Games

by Ed Galing

in our old age,  
my wife and i  
played these  
strange games,  
it didn't begin  
until we were in  
our late eighties,  
when my wife began  
to say,  
i am an old lady now,  
and you are an old man,  
i would smile and say,  
i can spell good,  
i can spell right  
in two ways,  
and she would begin to  
spell WRITE...  
and then RIGHT...  
i would applaud and  
say, that was very well done..  
she would smile back and  
say, see, i told you i  
could spell...  
never doubted it for  
a minute, i would say,  
now here is one for you  
how much is  
ONE plus ONE?  
she would wrinkle  
her brow as if in thought,  
then suddenly chuckle and  
say, ELEVEN....  
it never failed to make  
me laugh, too... i never  
even thought of alzheimers...  
aahh, the games that  
we once played in our old age.

## Any New Tricks to Share

By Reza Tokaloo

Does the clown have any new tricks to share?  
Bending and twisting his bright balloons.  
Singing songs that belong in Western saloons.  
Making the stranger dig into his pocket  
For a coin to spare.  
  
Does the clown have any new tricks to share?  
With the afternoon's bright wandering crowds.  
Looking for relief beneath green shrouds.  
Making the stranger dig into his pocket  
For a coin to spare.  
  
Does the clown have any new tricks to share?  
Born with a sad smile painted on his face.  
Selling off a piece of his silver grace.  
Making the stranger dig into his pocket  
For a coin to spare.  
  
Does the clown have any new tricks to share?  
Before he sells his final gag and gaff.  
While watching all the wayward children laugh.  
Making the stranger dig into his pocket  
For a coin to spare.



Poems may be submitted to: Marc D. Goldfinger,  
76 Unity Ave. Belmont MA, 02478

or email: [sparechangepoetry@gmail.com](mailto:sparechangepoetry@gmail.com). SCN cannot return poetry submissions, and authors will be contacted only if their poems are published.

### Every Thursday

Squawk Coffeehouse, 9 pm  
1555 Mass Ave., Cambridge  
Open mike for poets and musicians.

### Every Saturday

Out of the Blue Gallery, 8 pm  
106 Prospect St., Cambridge  
\$3-5 suggested donation.  
671-354-5287

### Every Sunday

Lizard Lounge Poetry Slam, 7 pm  
1667 Mass. Ave., Cambridge  
\$5. 671-547-0759

### Every Monday

Out of the Blue Gallery, 8 pm  
106 Prospect St., Cambridge  
\$4 suggested donation.  
617-354-5287

### Every Wednesday

Boston Poetry Slam, 8 pm  
Cantab Lounge, 738 Mass. Ave.,  
Cambridge  
\$3. 21+. 617-354-2685

### Second Thursday of Every Month

Tapestry of Voices, 6:30 pm  
Borders, 10 School St., Boston  
Free. 617-557-7188

### Second Tuesday of Every Month

Newton Free Library, 7 pm

330 Homer St. 617-796-1360

**Third Saturday of Every Month**  
Boston Haiku Society meeting,  
2-6 pm  
Kaji Aso Studio,  
40 St. Stephen St., Boston  
\$3. 617-247-1719

Poetry event listings may be submitted to  
[sceditor@homelessemPOWERMENT.org](mailto:sceditor@homelessemPOWERMENT.org)

# Volunteering with Street Youth

Caroline Fenton  
Spare Change News

Stand Up for Kids is a volunteer-based organization that provides services to unaccompanied minors that live on the streets of Boston. Unlike most programs, the organization sends its volunteers to the youths, rather than requiring them to come to a shelter or home to receive necessities like food, clothing, and toiletries. In addition to providing supplies, Stand Up for Kids helps homeless teens to receive medical and dental care, search for jobs and apartments, and access forms needed to enroll in school. Spare Change News spoke with Tracy Colligan, a senior out-

reach member with the organization, to find out what it is like to work with homeless youth and how volunteering can foster personal growth.

**SCN: What made you want to volunteer with homeless youth?**

**TC:** I have worked in human services for a long time, but I also had a more selfish reason: I'm very shy. I challenged myself to talk to and reach out to other people, so I gained a lot personally by working with these kids. It takes time to build any new relationship, and working with homeless youth is especially challenging because they have reasons not to trust others. So when that trust develops, it is rewarding.

**SCN: For how long have you been volunteering with Stand Up for Kids?**

**TC:** I've been doing outreach with them in Boston since 2001. I heard about the opportunity through Craigslist and I thought about the times I had seen young people passed out in a train station or in a doorway somewhere, and everyone just kept walking by. I'm not saying anyone should have a bleeding heart, but instead, notice the things we choose not to see.

**SCN: What is one misconception people have about kids who live on the street?**

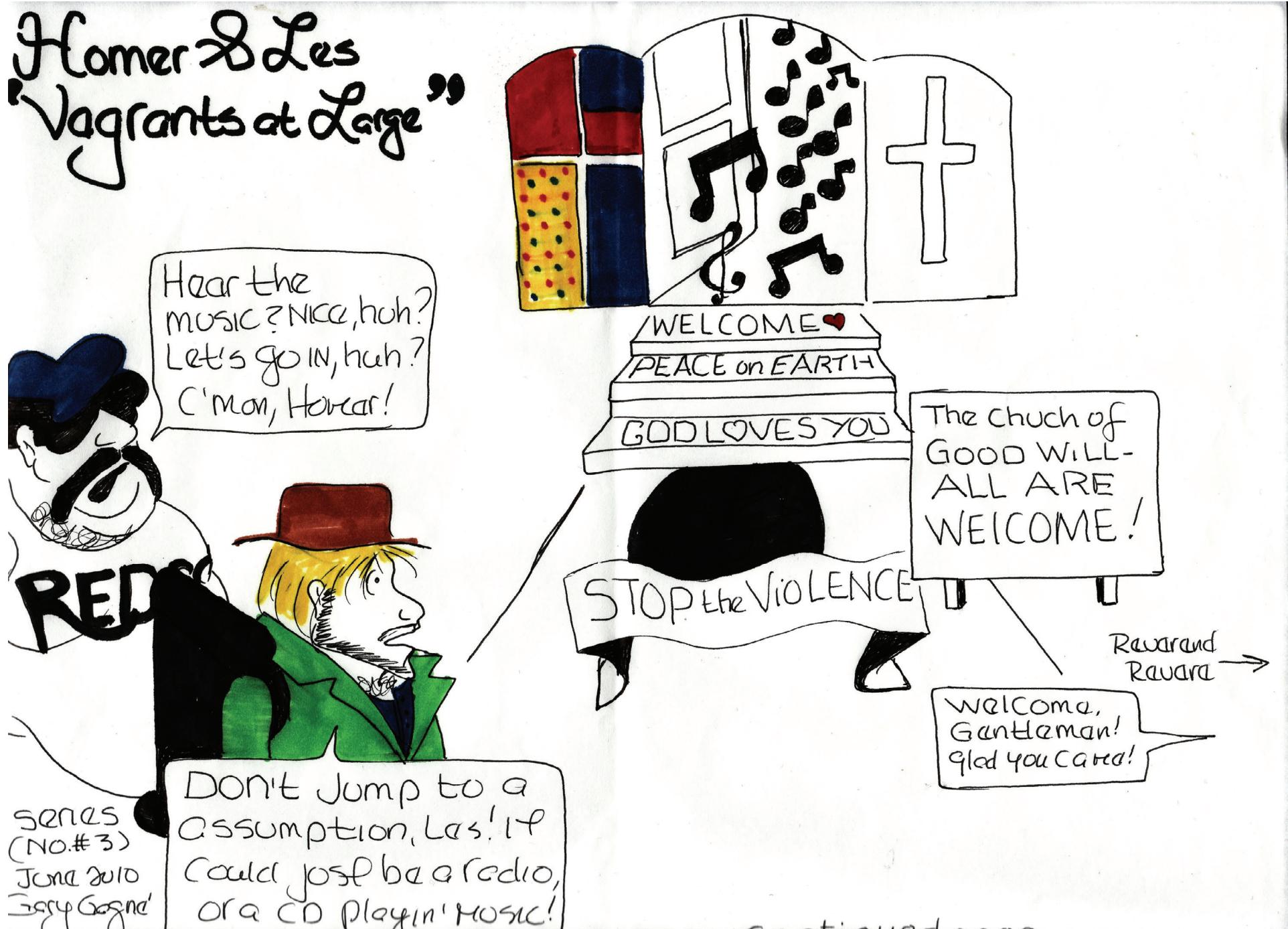
**TC:** That they want to be there. It's especially interesting to consider what you might call "posers". Kids who live on

the street quickly become aware that it is not a friendly place, and if they are choosing that life, it's because they left behind something even harder. But occasionally you see teenagers who find it exciting or fashionable to try out that life for a short time or who hang out with homeless friends, who may have other options. They are still vulnerable. The dangers of drugs, robbery, and sexual assault are there regardless of whether someone is "officially" homeless.

**SCN: What demographic is needed on your outreach team?**

**TC:** We look for volunteers of every age, *FENTON continued on page 12*

**BELOW:** The third in a series of cartoons by veteran Gary Gagne entitled "Homer and Les: Vagrants at Large". The 'toon chronicles the journey of two unlikely companions as they traverse city streets and desolate highways across the United States, en route to promise in Boston.



## Voices From The Streets

Voices from the Streets - a forum for those whose voices are too often ignored. From narratives to opinion to advice, these writers portray a unique perspective on life that might otherwise go unnoticed. Below, find that turning an ear towards those normally silenced opens the door to understanding and relating to those who have faced life on the street.

## A Tale of Inner City: The Virus (Part 1)



**Marc D. Goldfinger**  
Spare Change News

*Taken from the Diaries of the Damned—written before the Tales of Communion-----Insect-O-War.*

The day was grey on the interstate to Inner City and Dean sat in the passenger seat fitting a new collar onto the dropper. He stripped the edge of a dollar bill, ran the thin strip of paper through his mouth to wet it thoroughly, and then painstakingly wrapped it around the narrow end of the eye dropper.

"Want to hand me a new point, Peddlar?"

Peddlar grunted, took his hands off the steering wheel as they hurtled down the fast lane at more than seventy, tucked the wheel gently into stability with his knees and dug a new Yale stainless steel point out of his tattered overcoat.

Dean took the point and fit it onto the saliva-soaked collar-wrapped dropper. He pulled the rubber bulb off the top of the dropper, rummaged around in the glove compartment for a newly boosted pacifier, found one, moistened the inside of it with his finger and put it on top of the glass tube. He took some string from a spool of sewing thread and wrapped it around the neck of the pacifier to complete the seal.

"Look at this baby. The croakers at the hospital couldn't make 'em better, eh?"

"Yeah, you right about that. Now let's get somethin' to put in that rig. I'm sick as a dog," sniffed the Peddlar.

The station they were listening to started popping static and Dean played with the dial. He wiped his nose with the back of his hand. When he was dope-sick, that nose was a marathon runner. He got the news and paused, with his hand on the dial.

"....and the new virus has spread through Inner City at an alarming rate. Its source is unknown. The onset is rapid, starting with watery eyes and drippy nose, then the fever kicks in and the shakes start. Within three hours the infected individual leaps up and runs madly through the streets of the city spraying toxic bodily fluids from every orifice and screaming for relief. Only successive shots of morphine delay the final stages of the disease. The hospitals are warehousing victims and stacking them like cordwood in rooms, corridors, cafeterias and waiting rooms. The entire city is waiting for a cure and doctors are talking about seeking street dealers of junk to alleviate the . ." Dean twisted the dial until he found some music. The acapella version of "A Sunday Kind of Love"

hummed into the car.

"Traffic into the city is kind of light for a Saturday afternoon, huh?" said Peddlar.

"Yeah." Dean scrunched down in his seat and wiped his nose.

"Whaddya think of that virus?" asked Peddlar.

Dean was yenning for a shot and took a long time to answer.

\*\*\*\*\*

When they walked into the Kaleidoscope Eye Bar they saw that Sky was already there. The big man sat at the round table in the corner and looked up at them with his one good eye. With his long hair and patch over an empty eye socket, Sky looked like a pirate from days of old. Three of his followers sat at the table and moved exactly the same way he did. Peddlar and Dean sat down. Sky slipped a bundle of packets out of his shirt-cuff and Dean and Peddlar leaped up and ran into the bathroom of the bar.

There were three stalls in the bathroom. Two of them were empty. On the floor of the third a yellow-skinned man lay on the floor with his head drooping into the toilet. A blood-filled rig lay on the floor next to him.

"Yow," said Dean. "Check this out, another hype."

He scooped up the bloody fit and immediately ran hot water from the sink through it.

"Still good, no clog. We got here just in time."

They each pulled handkerchief-wrapped spoons out of their pockets, laid the dirty wraps to the side, and with precision made of daily repetition they slit the tape sealing the bags and shook the powder into the spoons.

There was a glass on the sink that Dean filled with water before they each stuck the nozzles of their gimmicks into the glass and sucked up the liquid. Dean sprayed the water onto the powder in the spoon and a couple of flecks of tobacco rose to the top of the water. He found an old Q-tip in his shirt pocket and pulled a small piece of cotton off the top. He rolled it around in his finger to ball it up.

He dropped the cotton into the liquid, pulled out a pack of matches, struck three at once and held them under the cooker. The liquid began to bubble and he lay down the spoon on the edge of the sink and shook the matches out as they began to burn his fingertips.

"Hey, watch my cooker," he yelled as Peddlar put his down on the sink.

"Don't worry about a thing," said Peddlar.

"Yeah, easy for you to say," muttered Dean through gritted teeth as he bit down on the belt that he had tied around his arm.

**GOLDFINGER continued on next page**

**tales from the curb**

## A Ray Of Hope



**James Shearer**  
Spare Change News

It's funny when you get hope and inspiration, especially when it comes from the unlikeliest of places. A couple of months ago I was contacted by a man named Shimshon Stu Siegel. Shimshon is the Director of a program out of Brandeis University in Waltham, Mass. called Impact Boston, for which High School students from around the country come out for the summer and volunteer and learn about nonprofits who address the needs of those less fortunate. Shimshon had actually wanted us to be one of the participants a year ago, but at the time SCN was going through its own little crisis. But this year when he called I was actually surprised, figuring why would someone want to be involved with such an unstable organization?

But we were in much better shape this time around and I felt I owed him this. We met and planned everything out. The program would take place for one week at the end of June, but by then I didn't know if I actually wanted to do it. By mid June, HEP was in the middle of hiring an Executive Director and as the time approached for him to take the reins my main thing was to get him settled in so I could walk away.

Truth be told folks, I was tired. For nearly three years I had been the interim ED, and this last year had taken a toll on me. I'd turned 50 the year before. I thought about my friends and family, and I didn't know if I still wanted to be Board President, let alone ED. I had a lot to think about, but backing away from this commitment was something I couldn't do. How bad could it be, I thought. It's just a bunch of kids who would probably lose interest real quick. I'd go through the motions and go home. Boy was I wrong.

They came into the church with their Rachel, their group leader, and after introductions they asked questions. By the questions they asked and the attention they showed, I could tell this group of youngsters was eager to learn all about homelessness.

When Norman, one of our Vendor Supervisors, and I informed them that they will experience what it feels like to panhandle, they didn't blink an eye. We went to the Park Street area of Boston. They spread out with their cups and homemade signs and went to work. As the day wore on, the effect of what it was like to be on the street and begging for change set in. They were not only amazed at how cruel people could be, but also how kind they can be as well. But what really shocked me was the reaction of the people who saw these kids. It was as if for the first time people realized that homelessness knows no age or color, even the police stopped and talked to these kids.

At the end of the day, they decided to donate the money they made panhandling to Bridge over Troubled Waters, which works with homeless children around their age. Also, thanks to Norman, they were able to go there and talk to someone their age that was homeless. The next few days were great as the kids eagerly learned all that they could about homelessness, and us. They liked being around us as much as we enjoyed having them.

**SHEARER continued on next page**

# A champion on the comeback trail

**Jose Espinosa**  
Street News Service

He still moves like a fighter, massive shoulders rolled forward, almost gliding across the room like he's stalking an opponent. Mattheew Saad Muhammad strides through the RHD Ridge Center, where he's just done his laundry, and sits in the lunch room.

Someone sees him and hollers: "Champ!" Saad Muhammad smiles. He's among friends here.

Saad Muhammad, former light heavyweight champion of the world, member of the International Boxing Hall of Fame, one of the greatest fighters of all time and a Philadelphia icon, is today a resident of RHD Ridge Center, the city's largest homeless shelter.

## The Champ is here.

"It's embarrassing, putting myself here," Saad Muhammad said. "I admitted myself here because I thought this was a reputable place where I could get my life together. I went through so much stress, so many problems. When I walked in here, I was in outer space."

"The day I walked through those doors, I thought: Do I really want to do this to myself? But they were willing to work with me. They said: Mattheew, we'll do whatever you need. I was shocked! Were they kidding? They didn't ask me for anything, they didn't want anything from me. They said they'd work with me, and it was going to be OK. They allowed me the days I needed."

That Mattheew Saad Muhammad, a man who's received the keys to this city from four different mayors, would turn up in a Philadelphia homeless shelter seems a shocking and depressing story. But Saad

Muhammad is not depressed. He is a man determined to start his life anew, and to do it right this time.

He is a man searching for the bottom, resigning himself to it, because only from there can he truly rise again.

"When you've got nothing, that's when you can really start over," Saad Muhammad said. "I will start from the ground up again. I know I will be successful again. I thank God for this chance, actually. I'm not mad. I'm delighted. Even if it kills me, I'm willing to make a change in my life."

"I'm not going to say I was a drug user. I'm better than that. But I did things that were not productive, that held me back. When I say to people, I'm trying to change, I mean I'll start over again from the bottom. I'm willing to do that. I'm ready for a change."

When Saad Muhammad first walked into the RHD Ridge Center, several homeless men in Philadelphia's largest shelter recognized him. They all had the same question: What are you doing here? He gave them all the same answer: He was homeless. Where else was he supposed to go?

He needed a place to regroup and get his head together and get his life straightened out. Saad Muhammad asked the men and the staff there not to tell his secret; no newspapers, no publicity. He needed quiet time, reflection and solitude. He needed help. He got it - and the homeless men alongside him in the breakfast line told no one they were sleeping next to the Champ.

"He gave the guys there with no hope some hope," said Catherine Canady, a support counselor at Ridge. "If they felt that because they took a fall, they can't get back up, he showed them that you can always get back up and keep going. He's given

them some inspiration, a sense of worth, of dignity. His presence there has given them hope."

Saad Muhammad breaks his silence now because he's ready, because he's on the road back. And he believes there is value to this story. He can be an inspiration to people, in a different way than when he held the championship belt, but an inspiration just the same. And that's something.

"I can't use my hands like I used to," Saad Muhammad said. "But I can use my mind. I might not be that fast guy I was before. But I'm able to think. I'm blessed by God to still have my wits, to be able to think for myself at last."

"The boxing champion who fell will rise again. It's not too late, you know? People can better themselves. You have to have heart, and be strong with it. I liked being an inspiration to kids, that kids could look at me and say: This guy had a hard time coming up. Maybe I can be like him."

And now? Saad Muhammad thinks for a moment and finds the message he wants:

## "Be better."

The story of Mattheew Saad Muhammad is one of the most classic and compelling in all of sports history. Born Maxwell Antonio Loach, his mother died when he was infant. An aunt took him in, but soon found that she couldn't handle the addition to her family. So she abandoned him, leaving the five-year-old boy on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway.

"17th and the Parkway," Saad Muhammad said. "The nuns found me, and took me in."

In Catholic Social Services, the nuns who raised him gave him the name Mattheew Franklin - Mattheew, from the Bible, and Franklin, from the Parkway

where they found him.

He bounced around to several schools, experimented with substance abuse and got into trouble. After a few scrapes, he went to the Jupiter Gym in South Philly to learn to fight. There he found his calling.

He rose through the ranks with a crowd-pleasing, fast-action style, a big puncher who liked to fight and feasted on punishment. In 1977, in just his 21st pro fight, he knocked out Marvin Johnson in the 12th round in a brutal fight to win the light heavyweight title. He defended that title three times before meeting Johnson again for the WBC title in 1979 in another classic. Bleeding heavily from cuts above both eyes, he knocked out Johnson in the eighth round.

Shortly after winning the title, he converted to Islam and took the name Mattheew Saad Muhammad.

After eight successful title defenses, many of them the kind of savage and bloody fights for which he was famous, Saad Muhammad lost the crown to Dwight Braxton (later Dwight Muhammad Qawi) in a 10th round knockout. In the rematch, Saad Muhammad fell in the sixth.

## His troubles had begun.

"I had so many people whispering in my ear: Yo, Champ, do this. Yo, Champ, do that. They'd give me that 'Champ' bull," Saad Muhammad said. "That's why I fell on my behind. I didn't train right. I had the wrong people around me, who abused me and used me. I had made so much money, I wasn't worried about anything."

"I tried to win every fight. But I was overmatched. I didn't train right. I just didn't do well, I didn't do it right. That's what happened."

"Braxton didn't fight the real Mattheew

**ESPINOSA continued on page 12**

## GOLDFINGER from previous page

The dropper was full of junk. Dean probed the old hole in his vein and pushed the needle into the familiar place. He felt it pull a little.

"Shit," he thought, "a fucking burr on the point." He knew he would have to sharpen it on a matchbook but hoped he could get the hit. It was a lot easier to work after the dope made him well again.

Peddlar sagged to the floor. He looked up at Dean with eyes like slits and pupils like pin-points.

"Not too bad," he said. "But I shoulda done three, ya know. I remember when the quality was much better than this."

Dean moved his head slightly to agree but he was totally focused on the sprig of blood that shot up the dropper's neck as he made the hit. He squeezed the pacifier. The contents of the dropper had almost disappeared into his arm when he

paused and let up on the pressure. The blood and water booted back into the glass tube and then he squeezed again as the rush hit him and he sent it home.

His nose stopped running, his teary eyes dried up, all the muscles in the back of his neck relaxed, and the tightness in his stomach just unwrapped like magic. He stood still, eyes half closed and his knees bent slightly. His fingers loosened on the bulb of the pacifier and the dropper began to fill slowly with blood.

Dean heard a voice coming from far away. It took him five minutes to respond.

(Continued Next Issue)

Marc D. Goldfinger is a formerly homeless vendor who is now housed. He can be reached at: [junkietroll@yahoo.com](mailto:junkietroll@yahoo.com)

## SHEARER from previous page

On their final day with us they went out and sold papers, and their enthusiasm was boundless. A couple of days later we went to a luncheon for all the students of Impact Boston, where we heard and saw some moving stories from kids and the people they worked with. Yes, I'm biased when I say that our kids had the best video, which you can see on our website. We said a tearful goodbye to them, and we all miss them.

As for me, well like I said,

you never know where hope and inspiration will come from. It came in the form of these 12 great kids and their team leader, Rachel. By watching and listening to them It made me realize that I need to keep fighting to end homelessness so the generation after me will keep fighting too.

I will stay Board President of HEP as long as they need me too, and though my role will lessen somewhat, I will still be here. And to those great bunch of kids, Thanks.

**ESPINOSA from page 11**

Saad Muhammad. He beat a shell of me. When I fought Braxton, I had sex that night. I knew better than that! But I had problems, I had so many things on my mind. I was confused. I wasn't right. I didn't have enough common sense, so I let it go. I let things ride. And I knew it - when I got in the ring that night, all I could think was: Please, God, make sure I'm safe."

Still he kept fighting. Saad Muhammad fought all over the globe, and fought until he was nearly 40. He was, indeed, a shell of himself at the end - in his final nine fights, Saad Muhammad was 1-7-1. But he fought.

"Oh, I loved boxing," Saad Muhammad said. "I just loved it. I loved the competition. I loved getting into the ring. It was an event. I loved traveling; I fought in England, in Germany, in Tokyo, in Spain, in Barbados. I'd get paid hundreds of thousands of dollars to go overseas, to travel to someplace great, and fight. To get paid to go to Hawaii and fight? How great was that?"

And there was the money. He battled money problems at the end, falling prey to the fast money and the fast life that so often goes with this territory. At one point, he said, he was supporting an entourage of 39 people.

"Money was flying everywhere," Saad Muhammad said. "Friends, friends of

friends, their mothers, their fathers, their brothers. They were all happy to be around me, eating me alive, taking money from me, rob me, steal from me, and I'd always say: That's all right, buddy! I was always so happy. Matthew Saad Muhammad was always up for it, with everybody.

"I gave a lot of money away. I had millions of dollars. I had savings. I had a bank account. But people I trusted run away with my money.

"I didn't care about that stuff. All I cared about was winning the title. I let other people take care of the money; I just wanted to fight. That's all I thought about - just let me get my shot at the title, and I don't care what else happens."

Saad Muhammad relies on friends for support here and there - "Most of them still owe me a lot of money," he said, with a laugh - and his youngest son Michael keeps his boxing memorabilia safe. Michael has his championship belt, waiting until Saad Muhammad is ready for it once more.

"He's a beautiful kid," Saad Muhammad said. "He's a loving person who never hurt nobody. I'm not ready to make a decision like that. I don't want to put that on them, to make them care for their father. I've got to be able to do that on my own.

"He's not going to see me like this."

Matthew Saad Muhammad turned 56 years old June 16, and celebrated his birthday with the homeless residents at Ridge

who now count him among their number. When he shakes a well-wisher's hand, it's with a meaty paw and a bone-crushing grip. He is still in good shape. His face is smooth, his eyes are bright and he smiles easily. In many ways, he looks the same. But everything is different now.

"He's a man trying to regroup his life," said John Cain, who works directly with Saad Muhammad at Ridge as the shelter's Alpha Day program coordinator. "He's run into some problems with people and with his finances. This is a man who was on top of the world at one time, and now he's living in a shelter.

"It's sad, where he is at the moment. But he's making a comeback. He is not broken, he is not in despair. He hasn't given up."

Cain, like many who grew up in Philadelphia, has a Matthew Saad Muhammad story. In 1979 Cain was a 10-year-old kid living in the Martin Luther King projects and he saw Saad Muhammad on the street, drawing a crowd, chatting with fans, among the people. His people.

"He had his belt on him; I'll never forget it," Cain said. "I was a poor kid, and I asked him to buy me an ice cream cone. He said: I think I can afford one ice cream cone. I told him that story. He didn't remember it, but I'll never forget it."

"I grew up watching the champ. It's a little sad to me, to see him in this situation. He has a lot of pride. The way he car-

ries himself demands respect. He doesn't demand anything special, he doesn't expect anything special. He expects to be treated like a man, and that's what we do with everybody here.

"Things happen. He was the champion of the world. He's going to get out of this, get this resolved, and get back to where he needs to be."

So many Saad Muhammad fights are classics; his old bouts regularly turn up on TV. But he doesn't care to watch himself very much, because, he said, "all I can think is: Oh, look at that man get hit."

That was always the legend of Saad Muhammad, the reason he earned the nickname "Miracle Matthew" - he would take so much punishment, take the hits, find himself in trouble. And then, with a granite chin and an iron will, Saad Muhammad would come off the ropes and win. His life is, in many ways, a story about what a man can overcome.

He knows it still can be. His second chance begins here, in a homeless shelter. Where it ends is up to him, now. That's all he asks.

"I went through enough. I had enough," Saad Muhammad said. "I'm on a straight pattern now. It's a second chance - another second chance."

"What I did was my own fault. I made my own decisions. This is my own problem. Let me work it out."

"I've still got a story to tell."

**FENTON continued from page 9**

race, gender, and orientation... we don't have too many adult men. It's great to have a diverse team because the kids we work with might relate better to one volunteer over another, and they usually respond well to an adult presence. We have great student volunteers, too, but they can't always commit long term because other life responsibilities get in the way.

**SCN: Which kids relate best to you?**

**TC:** Because I have experience working in treatment centers, I am able to offer a lot to youth with substance abuse problems. Some volunteers are very knowledgeable about GLBTQ issues... really, each volunteer brings unique strengths that the youth might relate to.

**SCN: What do you give to kids with drug problems?**

**TC:** We can help get them into treatment programs, but if they are unable or unwilling to take that step, there are other ways to help. For example, if someone is hooked on heroin, I'll give them a bleach kit to clean their syringes.

**SCN: What do you want people to know about youth with substance abuse problems?**

**TC:** Many people assume they are corrupted, or grew up in high-crime areas. But I have consistently worked with one individual who is a heroin user and is under 20 years old, from a prominent New England suburb, who has a family with brothers and sisters. He is not welcome at home and he feels very lost. Addictions can quickly take kids away from a stable living situation and they are still very innocent and extremely vulnerable in many ways.

**SCN: Are there more youth living on the streets in Boston this year because of the economy?**

**TC:** It's hard to say if there are more kids this year than any other, but definitely there are more in the warmer weather. Some kids refer to themselves as "travelers" and might hitchhike or hop trains, which can be very dangerous. I met one young man who had his leg amputated after train hopping.

**SCN: What advice do you have for potential volunteers?**

**TC:** Be patient. These relationships take time. Also, I've talked a lot about the hard aspects, but there are plenty of times where the youth just want someone to talk to and it's not usually so

dark because they are still young and have a chance to turn their lives around. My other advice is to use your unique talents. We've had volunteers visit middle schools to speak with students about what they can do if they or their friends are homeless. If you are a great graphic designer, fundraiser, or event planner-- I'm not an expert in any of those things, but they can be just as valuable to the organization as the street outreach.

**SCN: Have you had any large fundraisers?**

**TC:** We haven't. So really, new volunteers can be very creative in what they offer to assist homeless youth.

**SCN: Has volunteering made you more aware of kids that are at risk of homelessness?**

**TC:** It changes your whole world view because to help homeless kids, we need to find them first. It's amazing how many nooks, crannies, and alleyways you overlook. And how kids can mask their homelessness because they are teenagers and they will do whatever it takes to hide their status and fit in among their peers. Just because a young person has new jeans or sneakers doesn't mean they have a house.

To contribute financially or get involved as a volunteer with Stand Up for Kids, email boston@standupforkids.org

# Situations Wanted

This classified section is designed to offer advertising space to our vendors and readers. Its purpose is to better enable persons with limited resources to make connections that will facilitate their rise from poverty. Additionally, Situations Wanted is intended to unify the Spare Change community, linking vendors and readers to create new possibilities. Our advertising vendors are listed by first name and the spot(s) in which they typically sell. Unless otherwise stated, please contact the Spare Change office at (617) 497-1595.

## **JOBs**

### **Cher**

#### *Experience*

Vacuuming, cooking, cleaning, wash and wax floors, laundry, iron. Experience in caring for pets and overnights.

#### *Contact*

617-386-3445

### **Fred**

#### *Experience*

6 years janitorial; various day labor positions (e.g., catering, loading, stocking, dish washing, retail)

#### *Seeking*

Janitorial, stockroom, inventory, retail  
Contact: 857-241-9444

### **Robyn (Back Bay)**

#### *Seeking*

Spare Change vendor and writer looking for work in office or retail environment.

#### *Experience*

14 years of nursing home experience, scheduling, evaluations, ordering and stocking, customer service  
Please contact Robyn at 781-475-8287

### **Luis (Gov. Ctr.)**

#### *Experience*

Carpentry, plumbing, painting, stockroom, mailroom, shipping / receiving

#### *Seeking*

Stockroom, inventory, retail  
Contact: big\_thug5@yahoo.com

### **Kevin**

(Central Sq.; Community College)

#### *Experience*

17 years in building maintenance; electrical, plumbing, cleaning; much experience in bringing buildings up to section 8 code

#### *Seeking*

Caretaking, maintenance in any of above areas; offering reliable, dependable and neat service 24/7; free estimates; full resume and references available upon request.  
Contact: lilhoss08@yahoo.com (781)219-7486

### **Robert**

(SCN staff writer and vendor)

#### *Experience*

Customer service, sales, writing, food service (email for professional resume)

#### *Seeking*

Cooking, teaching cooking, nutrition, teaching computers (MS Word, resume design, or Internet), nutrition sales, office work, warehouse work, market research  
Contact bosonma@yahoo.com

#### *Price*

\$750-850/mo.  
Contact: 617-304-0343 (Walter)  
or 857-334-4317 (Susan)

## **ADVERTISERS**

### **Norman** (North Station) &

### **Reggie** (Copley Sq.)

Contracting SCN Advertisers for either Situations Wanted classified page, or for 1/8, 1/4, 1/2 or full page ads, in either black and white or color.

## **MISCELLANIOUS**

### **Robert** (SCN staff writer and vendor)

#### *Seeking*

Laptop computer (Windows or Mac); flash drive

### **Anthony** (Porter Sq.)

#### *Seeking*

Furniture, a TV, DVD player, plates, bowls and utensils, etc.

#### *Notes*

Recently received a section 8 voucher and would appreciate any assistance  
Contact: semaht2007@aol.com or 857-312-8371

### **Jim** (Back Bay)

#### *Seeking*

Laptop computer (Windows or Mac)

## **FOR SALE**

### **Robyn** (Back Bay)

#### *Selling*

HP 1310 series all-in-one copier, scanner, and printer.

#### *Description*

Approximately 3 years old; works well.  
Paid \$250, asking \$60

## **SPARE CHANGE IS SEEKING**

4 Apple Macintosh computers for our office (3 years old or newer). Also looking for Adobe Indesign software version CS3 or newer.

### **Anthony** (Porter Sq.)

#### *Seeking*

1 BR apartment

#### *Location*

Cambridge or off of red or orange lines

#### *Price*

Up to \$1362 (section 8 voucher)

Contact: 857-312-8371

### **Walter** (State Street)

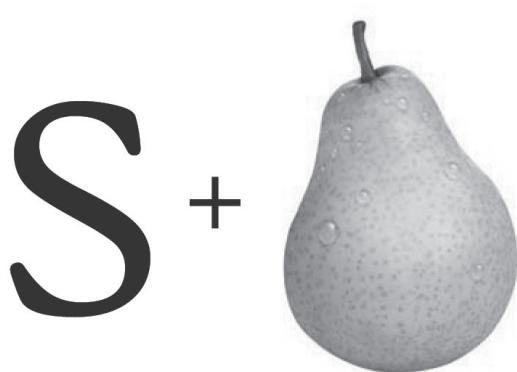
#### *Seeking*

2 BR or larger apartment

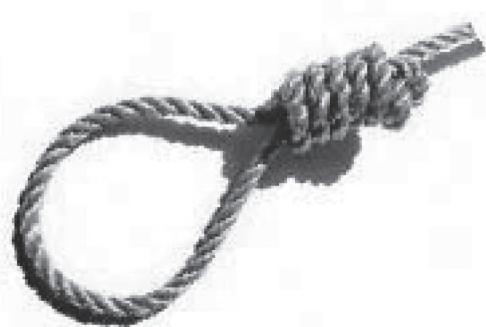
#### *Location*

Cambridge or off of red line

## Self-conscious Rebus



+ ge



## Sudoku

	7	1		8		2		
6		8	2					1
						1	5	
	8		9		5	4		
			3			9		
		7	3		4		8	
		2	4					
7					3	8		4
		5		2		7	9	

### Solutions to previous issue's puzzles

N	O	R
N	P	O
T	I	F

9	7	5	4	1	2	3	8	6
8	4	2	7	6	3	5	9	1
3	1	6	5	8	9	7	4	2
6	2	9	3	7	8	1	5	4
4	3	1	6	2	5	8	7	9
5	8	7	9	4	1	6	2	3
2	5	4	8	3	6	9	1	7
7	9	3	1	5	4	2	6	8
1	6	8	2	9	7	4	3	5

nonprofit

profit	pint	fi	pin	for
point	on	ti	tin	in
proof	no	it	nit	inn
roof	nor	pit	fop	fin
poof	pro	tip	poi	fip
poon	of	pi	nip	fit
prof	if	opt	or	

## State Flags

**A** Maryland

**D** Texas

**G** South Carolina

**J** Hawaii

**B** New Mexico

**E** Washington, DC

**H** Tennessee

**K** Alabama

**C** Colorado

**F** Alaska

**I** Ohio

**L** Arizona

# Helping Hands

Cambridge and Boston are teeming with organizations ready to provide food and services to the homeless and the needy. If you're in need, they're there for you. If you can volunteer or donate, most of them could use your help.

## Food

### DAILY MEALS:

*Pine Street Inn*  
444 Harrison Ave., Boston, 617-482-4944  
Breakfast: 6 a.m.; brown bag lunches during the day;  
Dinner: 5 p.m.; Chicken truck: 11:30 a.m.  
*Rosie's Place* (women & children only, no boys over age 11)  
889 Harrison Ave., Boston, 617-442-9322  
Lunch: 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.; Dinner: 4:30 p.m. - 7 p.m.  
*St. Francis House*  
39 Boylston St., Boston, 617-542-4211  
Breakfast: 7:30 a.m. - 9 a.m.; Lunch: 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.  
Emergency sandwiches: Weekdays 2:45 p.m. - 3 p.m.  
*Salvation Army* 402 Mass. Ave., Cambridge, 617-547-3400  
Lunch: 12 p.m.  
*Women's Lunch Place* (women & children only, no boys over age 14, male presence discouraged)  
67 Newbury St., Boston, 617-267-0200  
Open Mon. - Sat., 7 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
[www.womenslunchplace.org](http://www.womenslunchplace.org)

### WEEKLY MEALS

#### Monday:

*Church of the Holy Resurrection*  
64 Harvard Ave., Allston, 617-787-7625  
6 p.m. - 7 p.m. and take-out.  
*Mass. Ave. Baptist Church*  
146 Hampshire St., Cambridge, 617-868-4853  
6 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

#### Tuesday:

*Church of the Advent*  
30 Brimmer St., Boston, 617-523-2377 6 p.m.  
*First Parish Unitarian Church*  
3 Church St., Cambridge, 617-876-7772  
6 p.m. - 7 p.m. (doors open at 5:30 p.m.)  
*Faith Kitchen, Faith Lutheran Church*  
311 Broadway, Cambridge, 617-354-0414  
6:30 p.m. (second & last Tuesday of every month)

#### Wednesday:

*Salvation Army* 402 Mass. Ave., Cambridge,  
617-547-3400 5 p.m. - 6 p.m.  
**Thursday:**  
*Christ Church*, Zero Garden St. Cambridge,  
617-876-0200 6 p.m. *St. James Church*  
1991 Mass. Ave., Cambridge  
*The Women's Meal* (Women and children welcome)  
5 p.m. - 7 p.m. (food pantry 3 days/week)  
*Union Baptist Church*  
874 Main St., Cambridge, 617-864-6885. 5 p.m.

#### Friday:

*Arlington St. Church*  
351 Boylston St., Boston, 617-536-7050 5 p.m.  
*Food Not Bombs*  
Boston Common (near Park St. T station), 617-522-8277  
3 p.m. - 5 p.m.  
*Mass. Ave. Baptist Church*  
146 Hampshire St., Cambridge, 617-868-4853  
6 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

#### Saturday:

*Pilgrim Church* 540 Columbia Rd., Dorchester  
approx 8:45 (Boston Commons, near fountain)  
We serve soup, pasta, coffee, juice, pastries, sandwiches, and clothing once a month.  
12:30 pm  
We offer a free community lunch, it is a cafe style, and we serve the guests, no standing in line. The meals are hot and made with love by our very talented chef

#### Sunday:

*Food Not Bombs*  
955 Mass Ave  
(617) 787-3436  
Central Square Cambridge on Sundays from 3-5pm.

## FOOD ASSISTANCE

*Greater Boston Food Bank*, 617-427-5200

Serves non-profit organizations such as agencies, shelters, etc.

Office hours: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

*Project Bread*

617-723-5000; Hotline 1-800-645-8333

Referrals to food pantries throughout the city

*Somerville Food Pantry*

617-776-7687

Food pantry: Mon, Tue, Fri 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.; Wed 12 p.m. - 4 p.m.; Thu 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Somerville residents only. Those unable to use other pantries due to disability may call and ask for the Project Soup Delivery Coordinator.

*Brookline Food Pantry*

15 St. Paul St., Brookline, 617-566-4953

Tues. & Thurs. 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., Sat. 2 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Brookline residents only. Second-time visitors must present a letter from an advocate confirming that they are in need of food services.

*CEOCC (Cambridge Economic Opportunity Commission)*

11 Inman St. (basement), Cambridge, 617-868-2900

Food pantry: Mon, Wed 4 p.m. - 6 p.m.; Tue 12 p.m. - 2 p.m.; Thu 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.; Closed Fri.

*East End House*

105 Spring St., Cambridge, 617-876-4444

Food pantry: Tue 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.; Fri 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Offers assistance in filling out food stamp applications (call for appointment).

*Margaret Fuller Houses*

71 Cherry St., Cambridge, 617-547-4680

Food pantry: Wed. 5 p.m. - 7 p.m.; Thurs. 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. & 6 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.; Fri & Sat 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

*Pentecostal Tabernacle Church*

617-661-0222

Food pantry by appointment only; no deliveries or walk-ins; referrals to other food pantries

*Salvation Army*

402 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, 617-547-3400

Cambridge and Somerville residents only.

Food pantry: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. & by appointment

*St. Francis House*

39 Boylston St., Boston, 617-542-4211

Food pantry: Mon. - Fri. 10 a.m. - 11 a.m.

Sign up at the Counseling Desk in the St. Francis House Day Center

*St. James Church*

1191 Mass. Ave., Cambridge

Food pantry: Tues. 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.; Thurs. 11 a.m. - 12 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

*St. Paul's Ame Church*

85 Bishop Allen Drive, Cambridge, 617-661-1110

Food pantry: Wed. 12 p.m. - 2 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

*Western Ave. Baptist Church*

299 Western Ave., Cambridge, 617-661-0433

Food pantry: Every second Wed., 10 a.m.

*Zinberg Clinic Pantry at Cambridge Hospital* 617-665-1606

For clinic patients with HIV / AIDS only.

Food pantry: Mon. - Fri. 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Fair Foods \$2 a bag;

CAMBRIDGE, St. Paul's Church

29 Mt. Auburn St

Harvard Sq. Red Line

Saturdays 10-11

SOMERVILLE, Cobble Hill Apts

84 Washington St.

Back parking lot

(near Sullivan Sq.)

Every other Wed. 11:30-1

Mt. Pleasant Apts. 70 Perkins St. (off Broadway)

Every other Wed. 1:30 - 2:30

Hearty Meals for All

Somerville Community Baptist Church

31 College Ave. Somerville, MA 02144

Free Community Meals the second Friday of every month at 6:30pm

## Homeless Concerns

*The Women's Center*

46 Pleasant St., Cambridge, 617-354-8807

Computers, kitchen, space, children's room, and more. Walk-ins welcome.

Women & children only (no boys over age 12)

Hours: Mon-Fri 10am-8pm, Sat 10am-3pm.

*Cambridge Multi-Service Center*

19 Brookline St., Cambridge, 617-349-6340

City-run agency with additional community non-profit partners. Works with Cambridge families in shelters, provides shelter referrals and other housing assistance. Employs housing specialists for elderly and disabled.

Office hours: Mon. 8:30 a.m. - 8 p.m.; Tue., Wed., Thu. 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.; Fri. 8:30 a.m. - 12 p.m. Walk-ins accepted.

*Cardinal Medeiros Center*

25 Isabella St., Boston, 617-619-6960

Day center for homeless adults (50 years & older); mental health & nursing staff; help with housing searches.

Lunch served at 11:45 a.m.

Office hours: Mon. - Thu. 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.; Fri. 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

*Caspar*

240 Albany St., Cambridge, 617-661-0600

Open 24 hrs/day; emergency shelter open 4:30 p.m. - 8 a.m.; Clients who leave in the morning may not return until 3 p.m.; Clients staying multiple nights must prove recent local residency.

*CLASP (Community Legal Assistance Services Project)*

19 Brookline St., Cambridge, 617-552-0623

Free legal clinic for Cambridge homeless at the Multi-Service Center every Tuesday at 8:30 a.m.

*Ecclesia Ministries*

67 Newbury Street, Boston, 617-552-0623

Weekly Schedule for the Common Cathedral:

Sunday

- Worship at Brewer's Fountain on Boston Common, 1 pm  
- Gospel Reflection at St. Paul's Cathedral, 138 Tremont St., 2:30 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Monday

- Lunch at Sproat Hall (St. Paul's Cathedral) 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.  
- Eucharist & Healing (St. Paul's Cathedral) 1 p.m.

- Common Fellowship in Sproat Hall (St. Paul's Cathedral) 2 p.m. - 3 p.m.

Wednesday

- Common Art at the Emmanuel Church, 15 Newbury Street, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Friday

- Common Cinema in Sproat Hall (St. Paul's Cathedral) 2:30 p.m. - 5 p.m.

*Horizons for Homeless Children*

617-445-1480; [www.horizonforhomelesschildren.org](http://www.horizonforhomelesschildren.org)

Horizons for Homeless Children is seeking volunteers to interact and play with children living in family, teen parent, and domestic violence shelters in Greater Boston. We offer daytime and evening shifts, so there is likely to be one that fits your schedule. A commitment of 2 hours a week for 6 months is required. The next training session will be Sat., Sept. 27, 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

*Medical Walk-in Unit at Mass General Hospital*

617-726-2707

Provides minor medical care for adults. Patients are seen in order of arrival. MGH accepts most insurances but requires copayments.

Hours: Mon.-Fri. 8:30 a.m.-8 p.m.; Sat., Sun., Holidays 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m.; closed Thanksgiving & Christmas

### Rosie's Place

889 Harrison Ave., Boston, 617-442-9322

Women and children only (no boys over age 11)

Open 7 days a week; provides help with housing, medical care, job training, financial aid and education, legal services, rape crisis counselors, health specialists, and more.

### St. Francis House

39 Boylston Street, Boston, 617-542-4211

Meals offered 365 days/yr.; food pantry open weekdays. Offers a mailroom, open art studio, clothing lottery, computer library, support groups such as AA, showers, telephones, toothbrushes & razors, medical clinic, counseling & mental health services, housing counseling & stabilization services, & a women's center.

For more details on these services and for their specific times visit [www.stfrancishouse.org](http://www.stfrancishouse.org)

### Starlight Ministries

617-262-4567

Outreach van with food, clothing, blankets and worship

# Stories from the Street



## The Homeless Empowerment Project's Speakers Bureau

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Ever wonder what it's like to be homeless? Want to learn more about it while at the same time supporting the Homeless Empowerment Project, publisher of Spare Change and What's Up?

- Then take a look at our Speakers Bureau. -

You've probably already seen a lot of our dedicated vendors selling papers at various T stops around Cambridge & Boston, but now here's your chance to actually hear their personal stories and learn from their experiences.

Most of our vendors are homeless or at risk of homelessness, and all have experienced severe economic disadvantage. They are a diverse and hard-working group of men and women with stories to inspire and educate us all.

The Speakers Bureau is the perfect way for teachers, professors, community organizations or congregation leaders to educate their groups and put a human face on the realities of poverty and homelessness here in Mass.

Invite a vendor to come speak to your organization, school or congregation by contacting our main office at 617.497.1595 or emailing us at [sceditor@homelessempowerment.org](mailto:sceditor@homelessempowerment.org).